



Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
Richland, Washington 99352

98-PID-668

JUN 29 1998

Addressees – See Attached List

ACCELERATING CLEANUP: PATHS TO CLOSURE, INITIAL PUBLICATION

On June 30, 1998, the initial publications of the National and Hanford Site specific documents titled "Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure" are being made available to the public. Copies of the National document are being transmitted under separate cover by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Headquarters. Copies of the U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office document (Enclosure 2) are being directly mailed to Tribal Nations, stakeholders, regulators, and elected officials.

These documents are also available in the DOE Reading Room at Washington State University, Richland Campus, the Regional Public Information Repositories, and on the Internet at <http://www.em.doe.gov> and <http://www.hanford.gov/doe/10yrplan/hmd.htm>. Should you require additional copies of the Richland document, please mail your request to:

U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office
Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure
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Requests for copies of the National Paths to Closure document should be directed to the Center for Environmental Management Information at 1-800-736-3282.

Enclosure 1 is a summary of the comments received to the Draft Hanford Site Paths to Closure document that was released on March 2, 1998. Included in this summary are comments that were received during the Fiscal Year 2000 budget request meetings that pertain to the Paths to Closure document. We have determined that editorial changes to the Paths to Closure document would not satisfactorily address the comments received. Consequently, in order to properly address the concerns raised, the issues will be referred to established procedures and processes for resolution. This will be through the formal National Environmental Protection Act process, the Hanford Site Systems Engineering Integration process, or the formal process of updating the Hanford Strategic Plan. For those comments and issues that cannot be addressed through these methods, we will establish a separate process to track and resolve the stated issues.

Summary of Comments on the Draft *Paths to Closure* Document and Fiscal Year 2000 Budget Request

The Process:

The draft *Paths to Closure* (PTC) document was published and distributed in March 1998. At the same time, preparations were underway to submit DOE-RL's FY 2000 budget request to DOE-HQ in April 1998. Public meetings to discuss the FY 2000 budget request were held in Richland, Washington, on February 26 and March 12; in Portland, Oregon, on March 9; and in Seattle, Washington, on March 10. Since the FY 2000 budget request and *Paths to Closure* document are closely related, public comments have been summarized into areas of common concern or theme.

What we heard...

The public's comments were diverse and broad. The following comments are a cross section of the concerns expressed by the many specific comments received:

1. **Comment:** Consultation with Indian Nations is still inadequate or ignored; no real influence, no participation as co-decision makers or co-authors.
2. **Comment:** It is pointless to start Treatment, Storage, and Disposal (TSD) work without the commitment of all affected states.
3. **Comment:** Land Use decisions need to be made quickly. This is a precondition for determining the extent of cleanup. Currently, insufficient information exists as to what an acceptable cleanup will look like. Final environmental conditions need to be clearly described and agreed to with stakeholders.
4. **Comment:** There is a need to clarify how technology deployment will impact/ensure cleanup.
5. **Comment:** The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning horizon is too short to address permanent solutions to cleanup.
6. **Comment:** There should be a risk analysis of long term hazards. The Project Baseline Summary (PBS) risk data is without supporting data and is not technically defensible.
7. **Comment:** There is a lack of confidence in Hanford's cost estimates.
8. **Comment:** Restricting groundwater access (in perpetuity) is unacceptable as a remedial remedy.
9. **Comment:** The PTC document does not address transportation issues.

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